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LBJ Should Consult Emily Post By Richard Starnes



THE President's great prowess in domestic concerns and in the artful manipulation of Congress is acknowledged, but the suspicion grows that he is handicapped by a blind side in the conduct of foreign affairs.

President Johnson has endured no such humiliating disaster as the Bay of Pigs fiasco which the (CIA) concocted for John F. Kennedy. But (suspending judgment for the moment on Administration policy in Viet Nam) Mr. Johnson has been at the center of a number of minor imbrolios that have unnecessarily irritated

friendly foreign governments.

The needless affront administered to Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri of India and President Ayub Khan of Pakistan in bluntly postponing their visits is the latest case in point. It revealed in Mr. Johnson a towering non-comprehension of the needs and niceties of diplomatic usage.

It was not so much that it was done, since a wartime President must be conceded the right to arrange his own schedule, but it was the ham-fisted, insensitive way in which it was done that illuminated Mr. Johnson's misunderstanding of what takes place in that portion of the world east of Sandy Hook.

It isn't the first time. Britons are the best friends of the United States on earth, and Mr. Johnson hurt them needlessly at the time of the funeral of Winston Churchill. Englishmen understood that the ailing President could not himself pay final homage to the

greatest statesman of the century, but they could not comprehend his failure to send the Vice President in his stead.

Messrs. Warren and Rusk are socially acceptable officials who wear the right clothes and understand the small talk of state occasions, but England was burying Mr. Churchill and properly expected top representation. They got it, with the exception of communist countries (who hated Mr. Churchill because he had sponsored the Russian invasion of 1918 in an attempt to "strangle Bolshevism in its cradle"), and the United States, whose President simply misunderstood the plain requirements of the occasion.

One of the big problems involved in such gaffes is that people are unwilling to accept the obvious explanation that nothing more than a gauche oversight is involved. Knowing circles in England assumed that Lyndon Johnson, who is celebrated as the most vain man to occupy the White House since Chester A. Arthur, was simply unwilling to permit Hubert Humphrey to bask in the limelight, however funereal it was.

Another minor, but significant, example of the President's limited understanding of how the rest of the world thinks was in his appointment of a military sort as the new chief of the sprawling, elephantine Central Intelligence Agency. Most authorities seem to think Admiral Raborn is competent to the task, and his appointment was legal so long as a civilian was named to the Number Two slot. But it was a poorly considered appointment nonetheless, simply because it will serve to confirm the dread in which the CIA is held by Europeans and Asians alike. To them the CIA is a paramilitary organism dedicated to overthrowing governments, launching invasions and otherwise implementing dark, clandestine designs. Naming a retired admiral its headmaster was unwise for this reason.